26.

London's Lamentation

For the Loss of their

CHARTER.

AH wo to us! wo to us! we have lost our Charter, our Franchises, our Liberties, which were Royal Priviledges in the hands of Subjects, given to us by the Kings and Queens of *England*, by several gracious Grants, *&c.* which were to us of great Benefit, Power and Freedom, which we through Princely Bounty enjoyed above others: We indeed derived our Corporation from the Kings of *England*, yea, from thence proceeded its Origination and Essence; but we have now lost those Priviledges and Franchises which we did enjoy; so that we (by sad experience) find that *Corporations* are not immortal, though this of *London* hath been very long-liv'd, very great and splendid; yet we find that Liberties and Franchises may be lost, and forfeited (as the great *Bracton* saith) either through the Abuse, or for want of the right use thereof, and that so large is the extent of Royal Prerogative, that so mighty is the Power of the Prince, that he can call in question the *Franchises* of the most Magnificent *Corporations*, and if those *Franchises* (even those Royal Priviledges (through the Princes Bouney, put in the hand of a Subject) be misused, they may be seized into the Kings hands, and He that granted them to us, through our Misuse thereof) can take them away from us. Great were our Priviledges, and sumptuous was the Administration of the Government of our City (though through our Abuse of our *Franchises*, our Glory is now eclipsed; for our *Common Council* was as the *Parliament* of our *City*, and our *Mayor* as the *King* thereof, and our *Aldermen*, as the Peers, the *Commonalty* the *Commons* thereof: We had power to make *By-Laws* and *Ordinances* in our *Respective Companies*; but now, alas! we are at present divested; but in expectation of the Princely Favour and Grace towards us, and that our Benign Prince will condescend to

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ſhew us Favour, and that we may build laſtingly, we deſign to lay our Foundation low, to ſtoop low, humbly and ſubmiſſively to our Prince, whoſe Favour we do not deſpond of, through our humility, neither will we grow too much diſcontented with our loſs, ſince our Grief in this caſe cannot avail us, but render us the more unhappy; for diſcontented men are as a Watch over-wound, wreſted out of Tune, and going falſe; or like Ink poured into water, that fills the whole Fountain full of Blackneſs and Diſuſe, it caſts the Soul into the ſhade, and fills it more with contemplation of the unhappineſs, than thought of the Remedy; nay it is ſo buſied in contemplation of its Miſery, as there is neither room nor time for ſeeking and requeſting the Methods of *Relief*; but we will not ſo greatly lament as thoſe without hope, which is as the miſerable Mans God, that in the hardeſt gripe of Calamity, never fails to yield ſome Beams of comfort; therefore will we lie at the foot of our Gracious *King*, that he would let us riſe as the *Phœnix*; and though we cannot forbear to mourn in ſome meaſure for our faults and for our loſs, which if we could not lament, were hardneſs, but to mourn as deſponding, is endleſs; for though we fall, yet our Confidence is, that we ſhall riſe again, and that upon our humble ſubmiſſion, our *Princes* inclinations are ſo gracious, that we ſhall not abide *Deſolate*, but be a *Magnificent*, a *Loyal* and *Dutiful Corporation*; which *Submiſſion*, *Loyalty* and *Obedience* will render us deſirable to our *Prince*, and give us a true and permanent Intereſt in his Favour and Benignity.

FINIS.

LONDON,

Printed for *A. Banks.* MDCLXXXIII.

133791